

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0018] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0018] To ensure that a hermetic seal is formed between the optical fibers 10₁ and 10₂ and the ferrule 20 a solder 28 may be applied to the ferrule 20 at the location where the optical fibers 10₁ and 10₂ exit the small apertures 24. The solder 28 should have a relatively low melting temperature to reduce the risk of damaging the optical fibers. As is well known to those of ordinary skill in the art, in preparation for the solder, the portion of the sheath where the solder is to be applied should first be removed and the exposed portions of the fibers should be coated with a metallic material such as gold. Appropriate solder materials include tin, a tin-lead eutectic, and tin-silver.